

**MANAGING MONEY: THE CHALLENGE OF DEMENTIA AND AGEING
FINANCIAL COUNSELLING AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**FOUR POINTS, SHERATON,
161 SUSSEX STREET, DARLING HARBOUR**

MAY 21, 2013

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NATIONAL PRESIDENT, ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA**

I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH YOU TODAY ABOUT DEMENTIA.

I THINK IT IS PROBABLY NO SECRET THAT POSITIVE AGEING AND DEMENTIA ARE SUBJECTS I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT.

I AM PASSIONATE TOO IN THE BELIEF THAT AS PRESIDENT OF ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA WE CANNOT DO IT ALL BY OURSELVES IN THE ADVOCACY, POLICY AND SERVICES THAT WE PROVIDE.

WE NEED PARTNERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONS LIKE YOURS TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BETTER UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA, END OF LIFE ISSUES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING AHEAD.

I WOULD THINK THAT MANY OF YOU WOULD HAVE A BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF DEMENTIA.

YOU WILL KNOW THAT DEMENTIA IS AN INSIDIOUS DISEASE THAT DAMAGES THE BRAIN BY DESTROYING BRAIN CELLS AND THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THEM.

AND YOU WILL PROBABLY ASSOCIATE DEMENTIA WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND LOSS OF MEMORY, AS DO WELL OVER 90 PER CENT OF AUSTRALIANS.

FEWER PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE MORE THAN 100 CAUSES OF DEMENTIA AND THAT THE VARIOUS CAUSES, WHETHER ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, VASCULAR DISEASE OR OTHER DEMENTIAS ARE OFTEN MIXED TOGETHER.

DEMENTIA CAN AFFECT PEOPLE OF ALL AGES INCLUDING PEOPLE WHO ARE RELATIVELY YOUNG. RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE SOME 24,000 AUSTRALIANS UNDER 65 WITH YOUNGER ONSET DEMENTIA.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE PHYSICAL COMORBIDITIES OF DEMENTIA ARE CONNECTED WITH MANY OTHER ISSUES INCLUDING VASCULAR DISEASE, FALLS, EPILEPSY, DIABETES, SMOKING AND EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL.

THAT'S JUST A FEW OF THEM – I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE LIST IS MUCH LONGER.

THE GOOD WORK OF ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA OVER THE LAST DECADE HAS HELPED TO PROMOTE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE ISSUE OF DEMENTIA.

MEMBERS AND SENATORS IN OUR FEDERAL PARLIAMENT – AND WE NOW HAVE 48 PARLIAMENTARY DEMENTIA CHAMPIONS – FREQUENTLY QUOTE USE THE EVIDENCE BASE THAT ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA HAS GENERATED OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT THE DISEASE.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY MORE THAN 320,000 AUSTRALIAN MEN AND WOMEN WITH DEMENTIA; BY 2050, WILL BE ABOUT 900,000 CASES.

1700 NEW CASES OF DEMENTIA ARE DIAGNOSED EACH WEEK IN AUSTRALIA – THAT’S ONE NEW CASE EVERY SIX MINUTES.

DEMENTIA ALREADY SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTS ON THE HEALTH AND CARE BUDGET – IT TOTALS SOME \$5 BILLION ANNUALLY. BY 2030 DEMENTIA WILL BE AUSTRALIA’S THIRD LARGEST AREA OF HEALTH EXPENDITURE.

THESE STATISTICS REINFORCE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DEMENTIA ON OUR SOCIETY. THEY HAVE BEEN THE CORNER STONE OF OUR ADVOCACY TO GOVERNMENT BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT TREASURY AND DEPARTMENTS OF FINANCE FOCUS UPON.

HOWEVER IT IS THE HUMAN AND SOCIAL ELEMENT OF DEMENTIA THAT GREATLY CONCERNS ME.

**I WAS THE PRIMARY CARER FOR MY DAD WHO HAD VASCULAR DEMENTIA,
THE SECOND MORE COMMON DEMENTIA AFTER ALZHEIMER'S.**

**ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE IS THE MOST COMMON AND ACCOUNTS FOR 50-70
PER CENT OF ALL CASES.**

**I KNOW ALL TOO WELL AT A PERSONAL LEVEL THE TEARS AND
LAUGHTER THAT ACCOMPANY THE JOURNEY WITH DEMENTIA.**

**I WOULD NOT FOR ONE MOMENT ROMANTISE THAT JOURNEY BECAUSE IT
IS A JOURNEY THAT BRINGS GREAT TORMENT AND FRUSTRATION TO THE
INDIVIDUAL AND ENORMOUS STRESS FOR THE FAMILY CARER.**

**DEMENTIA IS DEVASTATING BECAUSE IT IS PROGRESSIVE AND TERMINAL.
MY OWN EXPERIENCE AND THOSE OF THE MANY FAMILY CARERS OF
PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA THAT I MEET AS THE PRESIDENT OF
ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA, IS THAT WE KNEW IN OUR HEARTS THAT
SOMETHING WAS WRONG YEARS BEFORE THE DIAGNOSIS WAS MADE.**

THERE ARE SO MANY SMALL TELL-TALE SIGNS THAT DEVELOP OVER THE YEARS, NOT JUST IN TERMS OF LOSS OF SHORT TERM MEMORY BUT IN RESPECT OF EMOTIONAL CHANGES, LOSS OF WORDS AND PROBLEMS IN COMMUNICATING, DEPRESSION AND AN INCREASING INABILITY TO ORGANISE LIFE AND DEAL WITH IT.

DENIAL IS SO EASY AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS FOR THEIR PART HAVE DIFFICULTY DIFFERENTIATING THE DIAGNOSIS OF DEMENTIA FROM STRESS AND DEPRESSION.

FOR THE FAMILY CARER THE JOURNEY WITH DEMENTIA IS A ROLLER COASTER.

THE GREATEST CHALLENGE IS REMEMBERING THAT THE PERSON YOU CARE FOR IS STILL THE PERSON YOU LOVE.

DESPITE THE CHANGES IN COGNITIVE CAPACITY AND BEHAVIOURS, THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA WILL CONSTANTLY REMIND YOU IN SMALL WAYS ABOUT WHO THEY ARE AND WHO THEY ALWAYS HAVE BEEN.

THERE WILL BE THE OCCASIONAL FLASHES OF HUMOUR. AND JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT ALL WAS LOST, THERE WILL BE FLASHES OF RECOGNITION – LIKE JOHN, THE MAN WHO TWEETED ME RECENTLY ABOUT HIS MOTHER, WHO HAS ALZHEIMER'S.

MY MOTHER HAS FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING HE TWEETED, EXCEPT THE SONG SHE USED TO SING FOR ME WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BOY.

I TWEETED BACK THAT I WAS SURE IT WAS BECAUSE HIS MOTHER'S MEMORY WAS LINKED TO HER LOVE FOR HIM, WAS THE REASON WHY SHE WAS ABLE TO REMEMBER.

THERE ARE MOMENTS OF LAUGHTER DURING THE DEMENTIA JOURNEY TOO.

LIKE THE TIME DAD WAS IN ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL HAVING A PACEMAKER FITTED...STRANGE SHIP THIS ETC...AFTERNOON TEA ON THE WEEKEND... YOU LOOK WELL GRANDPA. YES I'VE BEEN ON A CRUISE ETC.

YOU HAVE TO LAUGH SOMETIMES OR YOU'D PROBABLY SPEND TOO MUCH TIME CRYING.

WHEN GLENN REES, THE CEO OF ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA, FIRST MET ME FOR A COFFEE TO ASK IF I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN BECOMING PRESIDENT, I ASKED HIM IF THE JOB EVER DEPRESSED HIM.

I FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO KNOW IF ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA WAS AN ORGANISATION THAT WAS POSITIVE ABOUT ACHIEVING CHANGE AND A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA.

GLENN SAID HE DIDN'T FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BE POSITIVE BECAUSE THERE WAS SO MUCH THAT WAS WONDERFUL IN THE RELATIONSHIPS HE SAW EVERY DAY IN THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA.

IT CONTRASTED WITH THE NIGHTLY HORROR STORIES ON THE TV NEWS. IT REINFORCED THE CONFIDENCE HE HAD IN THE EVERY DAY ABILITY OF PEOPLE TO COME TO TERMS WITH WHAT LIFE DEALT THEM.

AND HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THERE WAS SO MUCH HOPE IN MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

AFTER BEING PRESIDENT OF ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA FOR TWO YEARS I FEEL MUCH THE SAME... BUT GLENN DIDN'T WARN ME THAT BEING PRESIDENT OF ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA WOULD LEAD TO SOME INCREDIBLE MOMENTS...LIKE THE MARCH ON PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA, TO LAUNCH OUR FIGHT DEMENTIA CAMPAIGN...500 PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA, FAMILY CARERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ETC.

SUE PIETER'S HAWKE SHOWING US THE ROPES....VIRGIN MARCHER STORY.

I DO HAVE A DEEP SEATED CONCERN ABOUT OUR SOCIETAL ATTITUDES TO DEMENTIA.

THE OVERWHELMING EXPERIENCE OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR FAMILY CARERS IS SOCIAL ISOLATION AND STIGMA. FAMILY CARERS AND PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA WHO I MEET TELL ME THAT THE FIRST CONSEQUENCE OF THE DIAGNOSIS OF DEMENTIA WAS SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LOSS OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

I THINK IN PART THIS IS BECAUSE OUR SOCIETAL ATTITUDES TO DEMENTIA HAVE BEEN FOUNDED ON THE MYTH THAT DEMENTIA IS AN INEVITABLE PART OF AGEING.

SADLY IT SEEMS THAT DEMENTIA, LIKE AGEING MORE GENERALLY, PUTS OLDER PEOPLE INTO THE CATEGORY MARKED DISPOSABLE.

WELL I FOR ONE, DO NOT FEEL OLD. AND I AM PRETTY SURE THAT THE MAJORITY OF OLDER AUSTRALIANS FEEL THE SAME. THERE ARE ALWAYS NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR US ALL.

AND WHILE LIFE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AFTER A DIAGNOSIS OF DEMENTIA, IT CAN GO ON FOR MANY YEARS. AND MANY OF THOSE YEARS CAN ENABLE THE INDIVIDUAL TO COMPLETE SOME OF THE THINGS THEY HAVE ALWAYS DREAMED OF DOING.

FOR THE RECORD, DEMENTIA IS NOT A NATURAL PART OF AGEING. IT IS A CHRONIC DISEASE WHICH BRINGS ABOUT CHANGES IN THE BRAIN; CHANGES THAT WE CAN SEE IN IMAGEING.

LAST AUGUST COMMONWEALTH AND STATE MINISTERS MADE DEMENTIA A NATIONAL HEALTH PRIORITY AREA. IT TOOK MORE THAN TEN YEARS OF SUSTAINED AND VIGOROUS ADVOCACY BY ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA TO ACHIEVE THIS OUTCOME.

MY BELIEF IS THAT THE INCORRECT ASSUMPTION THAT DEMENTIA IS A NATIONAL PART OF AGEING HAS BEEN PROFOUND IN SHAPING OUR COMMUNITY ATTITUDES.

THE MARKET RESEARCH DONE BY ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA LEAVES NO ROOM FOR DOUBT ABOUT THE NEGATIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH ATTITUDES TOWARDS PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA.

A NATIONAL POPULATION SURVEY IN 2011 FOUND THAT 44 PER CENT OF PEOPLE SURVEYED BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST OR TREATED UNFAIRLY; 22 PER CENT OF THEM SAID THAT THEY WOULD FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE SPENDING TIME WITH SOMEBODY WHO HAD DEMENTIA.

A STUDY LAST YEAR SHOWED THAT APPROXIMATELY ONE QUARTER OF THOSE SURVEYED WOULD AVOID SEEKING ASSISTANCE FOR MEMORY PROBLEMS. OF THOSE SURVEYED, 60 PER CENT INDICATED THAT IF THEY RECEIVED A DIAGNOSIS OF DEMENTIA, THEY WOULD FEEL A SENSE OF SHAME, AND NEARLY HALF SAID THEY WOULD BE HUMILIATED BY THE DIAGNOSIS OF DEMENTIA.

IT IS UNACCEPTABLE FOR PEOPLE TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON THOSE WITH DEMENTIA BECAUSE THEY FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE.

I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT WE CAN ALL DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS. WE CANNOT EXPECT GOVERNMENT TO DO EVERYTHING THROUGH FUNDING AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS.

WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY INCLUDING YOUR ORGANISATION AND YOUR MEMBERS IN PROMOTING ACTIVE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY BY PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR FAMILY CARERS. WHAT BETTER WAY COULD THERE BE OF PROMOTING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF DEMENTIA THAN SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA.

I'VE BEEN ASKED BY THE CONFERENCE ORGANISERS TO PUT FORWARD SOME IDEAS THAT FINANCIAL COUNSELLING AUSTRALIA AND ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA MIGHT PURSUE IN PARTNERSHIP.

LET ME BEGIN BY THROWING OUT A CHALLENGE OUT TO YOU ALL.

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELVES TO BE A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY INDUSTRY? AND IF NOT, WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WOULD TAKE TO MAKE YOUR INDUSTRY AND YOUR INDIVIDUAL ORGANISATIONS MORE DEMENTIA- FRIENDLY?

AT OUR BIENNIAL ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE IN HOBART LAST WEEK I LAUNCHED TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS; ONE ON DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND THE OTHER ON CREATING DEMENTIA- FRIENDLY ORGANISATIONS.

BOTH PUBLICATIONS HAVE A COMMON THEME OF PROMOTING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT FOR BOTH THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR FAMILY CARERS.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY SOCIETIES HAS TAKEN ROOT OVERSEAS ESPECIALLY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND BELGIUM. IT'S AN EXCITING IDEA BECAUSE IT SEEKS TO PROMOTE LOCAL INITIATIVES THAT DEVELOP SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE DEMENTIA FRIENDLY.

IT IS THE CONCEPT OF DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY ORGANISATIONS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS MORE ON NOW.

IN 2005 AT A NATIONAL CONSUMER SUMMIT AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE IN CANBERRA, CONSUMERS PUT FORWARD THE IDEA OF A COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT SYMBOL THAT WOULD IDENTIFY AN ORGANISATION OR SERVICE THAT HAS STAFF TRAINED TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.

THE CENTRAL FEATURE OF THIS APPROACH IS THAT THE ORGANISATION INVOLVED, BE IT HOSPITALS, BANKS, FINANCIAL COUNSELLORS OR CENTRELINK MAKES A COMMITMENT TO TRAIN AND EDUCATE STAFF ABOUT DEMENTIA AND ON THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE TO INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE A COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.

A START HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE. BALLARAT HEALTH SERVICES IN VICTORIA HAS DONE WONDERFUL WORK USING A SYMBOL FOR COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.

THIS APPROACH HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO MORE THAN 20 HOSPITALS IN VICTORIA AND IMPROVED OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN REPORTED FOR PATIENTS AS WELL AS HEALTH STAFF.

LET ME BE CLEAR THAT THE SYMBOL IS TO IDENTIFY A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY ORGANISATION, NOT THE INDIVIDUAL. IT IS A MATTER OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE WHETHER THE INDIVIDUAL CHOOSES TO SELF IDENTIFY AND MAKE USE OF THE SERVICE.

IN THE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT THE BENEFITS OF STAFF KNOWING THAT THE PERSON MAY HAVE A COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT ARE ALL TOO OBVIOUS. FREQUENTLY BECAUSE THERE IS A FAILURE TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT IN THE ACUTE CARE SETTING, THE CONSEQUENCE IS INCREASED FALLS, DELLUSION, AND MALNUTRITION. WE KNOW FROM FAMILY CARERS AND PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA THAT THEY SOMETIMES STRUGGLE TO ACCESS CENTRELINK AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ENTITLEMENTS AND HOW TO ACCESS THEM.

THE TRAINING REQUIRED FOR STAFF IS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF DEMENTIA AND IN PARTICULAR, ON HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.

AS FINANCIAL COUNSELLORS, YOU'RE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE AND GOOD COMMUNICATION.

SO I HOPE YOU WILL CONSIDER BECOMING A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY ORGANISATION AND PROMOTE THE CONCEPT AMONG YOUR MEMBERS.

MY SECOND THOUGHT IS ABOUT ACTIVELY PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING NOT ONLY INDIVIDUAL'S FINANCIAL AFFAIRS, BUT TO THINK ABOUT APPOINTING SOMEONE AS POWER OF ATTORNEY.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE NECESSITY OF ORGANISING THEIR FINANCIAL AND LEGAL AFFAIRS WHILE THEY STILL HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DO SO.

WE KNOW ONLY TOO WELL THAT MOST PEOPLE PUT OFF MAKING WILLS FOR AS LONG AS THEY CAN; THEY DO THE SAME ABOUT CONSIDERING APPOINTING A POWER OF ATTORNEY AND END OF LIFE ISSUES GENERALLY.

ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA HAS DONE MUCH WORK IN THIS AREA AND WE HOPE THAT IN THE COMING MONTHS TO LAUNCH A WEBSITE THAT WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE ISSUES AND HOW TO GO ABOUT PUTTING THEIR AFFAIRS IN ORDER..

OF COURSE, THE TASK, IS NOT MADE ANY EASIER BY THE DIFFERENT LEGAL PROVISIONS IN OUR STATES AND TERRITORIES AND THE CONFUSING AND DIFFERENT TERMINOLOGY THAT'S SO OFTEN USED. IT SEEMS TO ME WE HAVE A COMMON INTEREST IN THESE ISSUES AND WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN COLLABORATING WITH YOU TO ACHIEVE BETTER OUTCOMES.

PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA DO WORRY ABOUT THEIR FINANCES...SOMETIMES BECAUSE THEY LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO BE NUMERATE PEOPLE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM TOO.

MY FATHER FREQUENTLY WORRIED ABOUT HIS FINANCES. HE'D RING ME IN AN AGITATED STATE. I HAVE NO MONEY. YES YOU DO DAD. EVERYTHING IS FINE...BUT WHEN HE WAS IN ONE OF THOSE MOODS NOTHING COULD PLACATE HIM.

SO I USED TO ARRANGE FOR THE MAN WHO HAD HIS POWER OF ATTORNEY, WHO WAS ALSO AN ACCOUNTANT, TO COME AND CALL ON HIM TO REASSURE HIM EVERYTHING WAS FINE.

IT ALWAYS WORKED. DAD WOULD RING ME TO REPORT THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD HAD BEEN TO SEE HIM, AND HIS FINANCES WERE IN GOOD SHAPE.

THE THIRD SUGGESTION TODAY CONCERNS THE NEED FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES TO HAVE GOOD ADVICE ON HOW TO ARRANGE THEIR AFFAIRS IN RESPECT OF AGED CARE.

THE USER CHARGING SYSTEM IN RELATION TO AGED CARE SERVICES IS ALREADY COMPLEX, NOT LEAST IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM. IT IS AN AREA WHERE MANY OLDER PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES WILL LOOK FOR ADVICE.

MY FEELING IS THAT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT OLDER PEOPLE HAVE IN THIS RESPECT WILL ONLY BECOME MORE DIFFICULT AS GOVERNMENTS CHANGE THE RULES AND INCREASE USER CHARGES IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND COMMITMENT.

I ASSUME THAT MOST OF YOU WILL BE AWARE OF THE MAJOR CHANGES PROPOSED IN USER CHARGES FOR AGED CARE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE *LIVING LONGER. LIVING BETTER.* AGED CARE REFORMS.

WHILE THEY HOLD OUT THE PROMISE OF GREATER EQUITY IN THE WAY CHARGES ARE MADE, THEY WILL ALSO RESULT IN HIGHER LEVELS OF USER CHARGES AND IMPORTANT CHANGES IN RESPECT OF HOW ASSETS ARE TREATED.

IT IS NOT MY INTENTION TO EXPLORE THE COMPLEXITY OF THESE CHANGES TODAY BUT RATHER THE IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING THAT OLDER PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE ACCESS TO GOOD ADVICE.

AGAIN I AM SURE THIS IS AN AREA THAT WE COULD WORK WITH YOU AND PERHAPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE COUNCIL ON THE AGEING.

LASTLY, I HOPE YOU WILL SHARE THE PASSION I HAVE TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN DEMENTIA RESEARCH. IT IS OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. AND WHAT COULD BE A MORE WORTHWHILE OBJECTIVE THAN WORKING TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT DEMENTIA.

WITH INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH WE WILL BE ABLE TO BETTER IDENTIFY THE RISK OF DEMENTIA AND DEVELOPING INTERVENTIONS THAT WILL DELAY THE PROGRESSION OF THE DISEASE SO THAT A DEMENTIA-FREE LIFE BECOMES POSSIBLE FOR MORE PEOPLE.

IF THE ONSET OF DEMENTIA COULD BE DELAYED BY JUST FIVE YEARS, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA COULD BE REDUCED BY ONE THIRD BY 2050.

IN 2012-2013 THE NATIONAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL ALLOCATED \$21.5 MILLION FOR DEMENTIA RESEARCH COMPARED WITH \$162 MILLION ON CANCER RESEARCH, \$94 MILLION ON CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND \$63 ON DIABETES RESEARCH.

THIS IS SIMPLY NOT GOOD ENOUGH. IF AUSTRALIA IS SERIOUS ABOUT TACKLING THE ISSUE OF DEMENTIA, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY REGARDING RESEARCH FUNDING NEEDS A DRAMATIC OVERHAUL IF IT IS TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH CONCERNS OF AUSTRALIANS WHO HAVE A CHRONIC DISEASE SUCH AS DEMENTIA.

THROUGH THE ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA DEMENTIA RESEARCH FOUNDATION, WE AIM TO MAKE A VITAL CONTRIBUTION TO DEMENTIA RESEARCH BY INCREASING CAPACITY IN DEMENTIA RESEARCH AND ASSISTING THE CAREERS OF EMERGING AND PROMISING RESEARCHERS.

ON YOUR WAY TODAY, PEOPLE WILL BE HANDING OUT SOME PUBLICATIONS ABOUT THE WORK OF OUR RESEARCH FOUNDATION. PLEASE TAKE ONE AND PERHAPS YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY IN YOUR WORK TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE THINKING ABOUT THEIR FINANCES, TO INCLUDE DEMENTIA RESEARCH IN THE PRIORITIES THEY DECIDE.

WE ARE LIVING IN A TIME WHEN THERE ARE EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES TO CHANGE SOCIETAL ATTITUDES TO AGEING AND IN PARTICULAR TO GIVE PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE.

I HOPE I HAVE HELPED GIVE YOU A FEW INSIGHTS INTO DEMENTIA AND. THAT AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THIS SESSION, THERE WILL BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA TO WORK WITH FCA ON PROMOTING THE CONCEPT OF DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY ORGANISATIONS, PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL AND LEGAL PLANNING AND END OF LIFE ISSUES AND ASSISTING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW PEOPLE SHOULD THINK ABOUT THE NEW USER CHARGING REGIMES IN AGED CARE.

I ALSO HOPE YOU WILL RISE TO THE CHALLENGE OF PROMOTING PUBLIC INTEREST IN INVESTING IN DEMENTIA RESEARCH.

AFTER ALL, NONE OF US KNOWS, WHERE LIFE WILL TAKE US.

WE DO KNOW THAT RIGHT NOW ALMOST ONE IN 10 AUSTRALIANS OVER 65 HAS DEMENTIA AND THAT ONE IN THREE AUSTRALIANS OVER 85 HAS THE DISEASE.

THE FIGURES ARE HIGH AND WILL GET HIGHER. ANY ONE OF US COULD BECOME A CASUALTY.

SO, IT'S IN ALL OUR INTERESTS, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO ARE LIVING WITH THE DISEASE, TO ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY AUSTRALIA.

THANK YOU.